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SUBJECT: UGANDA/SOMALIA: U.S.-CONTRACTED AMISOM SUPPORT
FLIGHT CRASH KILLS ELEVEN

¶1. Summary: A U.S.-contracted Ilyushin-76 (IL-76) transport plane bound for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) crashed into Lake Victoria just after take-off at approximately 0515 March 9. The plane was carrying cargo and passengers en route Mogadishu. All eleven passengers were killed, including the deputy AMISOM contingent commander, Brigadier General Saloum Nkikumana. The Defense Attache and emboffs went to the scene to provide assistance. Post expects a formal request for U.S. investigation and recovery assistance from the Ugandan Government. We will watch closely for the potential impact this latest tragedy has on Uganda's continued commitment to the AMISOM operation. End Summary.

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EXPLOSION OVER LAKE VICTORIA
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¶2. The U.S.-contacted IL-76 aircraft took off from Entebbe International Airport at 0512. At 0513, a small flash in the air was reported by Anthony Allen, the air manager at the airbase and two fishermen on the lake at the time. DynCorp, the U.S. contractor, provides logistics assistance for the AMISOM operation from its base at Entebbe. A large explosion lit up the sky and scattered debris, according to the eye witnesses. The aircraft went down five nautical miles south/southeast from Entebbe. Rescue boats arrived between 0530 and 0535 and picked up the two fishermen, who had been thrown from their boat due to falling debris. Ugandan authorities questioned them. They report that the aircraft never gained any lift. Boats, helicopters, and light aircraft are being used to view the crash site. Most of the aircraft and debris sunk in about 24-26 meters of water and another 10 meters of silt. Some floating debris was recovered. Press reports that bodies have been recovered are false.

¶3. Ugandan authorities report that none of the eleven passengers survived. There were four Russians (aircrew), two Ugandans (one air crew member and a Ugandan major), one South African de-miner working for AMISOM, one Indian national (DynCorp) accountant), and three Burundians. Brigadier General Saloum Ndikumana, Burundi's Deputy Contingent Commander, Colonel Nayubu from AMISOM's operations staff, and Captain Pamphile Nkuruziza from the Burundian National Defense Forces were among the dead.

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POST ACTIONS
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¶4. DATT and two emboffs were on site providing assistance to DynCorp and Ugandan authorities, who set up an Operations Center at the airport. Post contacted Dennis Jones, a National Transportation Safety Board officer, who is in Nairobi for a Safe Skies for Africa Conference. Jones has been working with Ugandan Civil Aviation Authorities and

emboffs to ensure proper notifications have been made according to International Civil Aviation Organizations (ICAO) regulations.

15. Uganda's Minister for Transport and Works, John Nasasira, visited the crash site at mid-day. He told Emboff that Uganda may need U.S. investigation and recovery assistance. We expect two formal requests for assistance from the Ugandan Government. The Ugandan Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF) may request mil-mil assistance in the form of divers and sonar. Once we receive the UPDF's specific request, we will pass it to AFRICOM. We will continue to monitor the situation and be helpful to the Ugandan authorities and DynCorp.

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COMMENT
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16. The crash has dealt the AMISOM operation another blow. We will be watching to see what impact, beyond the immediate logistics problems, it will have on Ugandan and Burundian resolve to stay the course.
BROWNING